

A9

WASHINGTON POST
3 February 1987

For Gates, an Ambition Realized

Reagan's Choice for CIA Is a Favorite of Departing Director

By Dusko Doder
Washington Post Staff Writer

Robert M. Gates told colleagues about eight years ago that there was one job he would really like to have. Yesterday, he got it when President Reagan named him to replace William J. Casey as director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Assuming he is confirmed by the Senate, Gates, 43, would become the youngest person ever to head the agency. Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill praised his nomination yesterday, but he owes his rapid rise not just to talent but to the patronage of his superiors. Casey, in particular, was known to have an almost paternal attitude toward Gates.

Sen. David L. Boren, (D-Okla.), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said confirmation hearings on Gates' nomination would be held Feb. 17. He said the committee planned to question Gates "very thoroughly" about his previous testimony on the Iran-contra affair.

Boren said Gates, as acting CIA director, has been "very candid and forthcoming" and has indicated a readiness to be more candid with the committee in a joint effort to rebuild mutual trust, which was eroded during Casey's tenure.

Boren said he and "most committee members had a very positive feeling" toward Gates, adding "I don't see any reason why" he would not be confirmed. He said he expected the public hearings to last no more than one day, "unless something unforeseen happens."

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.), former vice chairman of the intelligence committee, commended Reagan for making a "wise" choice, contending that a nomination of a political figure would have turned the confirmation process into a "long, drawn-out and contentious" affair.

Congressional sources said Gates

was expected to undergo some tough questioning on his role in the Iran-contra scandal, particularly about whether he knew of the illegal diversions of Iran arms sales profits to the contras. Leahy said he would be "very concerned" if it turns out that Gates knew about these improper activities and did not inform Congress.

Congressional sources said Gates will be asked about his Dec. 4 testimony before the committee, as well as Casey's description of the agency's role in the arms affair.

Gates told the committee in December that Casey knew only "bits and pieces" about the possible diversion of Iran arms sales funds to the contras. The panel's report released last week revealed that Casey knew much more than that by the time he appeared before the committee on Nov. 21.

The panel was told that as early as Oct. 1, 1986, a senior CIA analyst told Gates he was concerned that money from the Iran arms sales was being diverted to the contras. According to the report, he knew that the key U.S. officials involved in the project, Lt. Col. Oliver L. North of the National Security Council and retired Air Force major general Richard V. Secord were both involved in the contra operation.

According to the report, Gates was "surprised and disturbed" and told the analyst to see Casey. Gates and the analyst did not discuss the potential illegality of the action. On Oct. 7, Gates, the analyst and Casey conferred on the matter and Gates reported the analyst's concerns about a funds diversion.

Two days later, Casey and Gates met for lunch with North. Gates reported that "North made a very cryptic reference to a Swiss account and money for the contras." Gates added that neither he nor Casey pursued the matter but merely asked whether there was any direct or indirect CIA involvement. Gates later noted for the

record that North "confirmed" that the agency was not involved.

However, according to sources, Gates took action shortly after the Iran-contra scandal broke by sending a videotaped message around the agency and to all stations abroad, saying bluntly that the CIA needed to learn a lesson from the affair. The classified videotape message, among other things, had Gates assert that the agency would never again undertake such an operation without a written finding in advance.

If confirmed, Gates would succeed Casey in the twin role as CIA director and director of central intelligence. The latter embraces overall responsibility for the entire U.S. intelligence community, including the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and various intelligence branches of the armed services.

Gates has been acting director since Dec. 18, when doctors removed a cancerous tumor from Casey's brain.

People who have worked with Gates over the years described him yesterday as an intelligent and well-organized person. Critics, however, charged that Gates was a bureaucratic climber or, as one of his former colleagues put it, a "modern American apartheid."

But senior officials Gates worked for in the 1970s, such as Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's national security adviser, and Rep. Dick Cheney (R-Wyo.), who was President Ford's chief of staff, said they expected Gates to do "the kind of outstanding job as CIA director as he had done in the past."

Brzezinski described Gates as a man of "good judgment, well versed in Soviet affairs, which is rather unusual."

A rival described Gates as a "tough bureaucratic infighter." But he said Gates was also extremely careful, conscientious—an "almost ideal bureaucrat."

ROBERT M. GATES**AGE** 43**BACKGROUND** Native of Wichita, Kan.**EDUCATION** BA, College of William & Mary, 1965; MA in History, Indiana University, 1966; PhD in Russian and Soviet History, Georgetown University, 1974.**PROFESSIONAL CAREER** Joined the CIA in 1966. Assigned to the staff of the National Security Council in 1974. Served on the NSC under presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter. Returned to the CIA January 1980. Served as national intelligence officer on the Soviet Union before appointment as deputy director for intelligence in January 1982. Appointed chairman of the National Intelligence Council by CIA Director William J. Casey in September 1983. Sworn in as deputy director of the CIA April 18, 1986. Nominated to replace Casey yesterday.**HONORS** Recipient of the Intelligence Medal of Merit and the Arthur S. Fleming Award, presented annually to the 10 most outstanding men and women in federal service.**FAMILY** Married, two children.

SOURCE: Central Intelligence Agency.

THE WASHINGTON POST

From the time he joined a CIA career training program in 1966, Gates quickly advanced himself through a series of positions near the center of national decision-making.

A native of Wichita, Kan., he graduated from the college of William and Mary in 1965, received a master's degree in Russian history from Indiana University in 1966,

then joined the CIA where he served as a current intelligence analyst and intelligence adviser for the strategic arms limitation talks. He received his doctorate from Georgetown University in 1974. His dissertation dealt with Soviet assessments of China.

In 1974, he joined the National Security Council staff and served presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter. People who knew Gates in those years said he was a workaholic, "not a warm guy, not the kind of guy you'd like to spend a weekend with."

Gates returned to the CIA in January 1980 as national intelligence officer on the Soviet Union. He later served as Casey's executive secretary for a year before being appointed deputy director of intelligence in January 1982, putting him

in charge of the entire analytical branch of the agency.

Gates distinguished himself in this job, energetically trying to upgrade the analytical branch. He put extra funds for travel, study and language training for the analysts. He also sought to improve contacts with the academic community and encourage more competitive analysis.

Sources said that by 1985, Casey was talking privately about Gates as a future CIA director. Casey also took Gates to the White House often and made sure that he developed relations with senior administration figures.

Gates, one of his intelligence associates said yesterday, "is a creation of the National Security Council staff system and Bill Casey."